Considering the tenacity with which British interests and prestige had formerly been defended, it was surprising that now they should be so unresistingly sacrificed. Nerveless seemingly were the hands which exercised authority, feeble the response when authority was challenged. Empires, like crops, must constantly be rotated; they flourish only to languish, arrogance and rapacity soon losing their momentum, giving place to a craven desire to keep what has been won; then to a readiness, for the sake of peace and quietness, to disgorge, though by that means peace and quietness are never attained, only their opposites—strife and disquiet. The sun seemed to be setting on the great British Empire on which it never sets.

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Rats, when they find a carcass, take watchful bites at its extremities; then prudently withdraw to see whether any ill consequences follow before attacking the main portions. In the same way, when it became apparent that Japan's conquest of Manchuria had not been appreciably impeded, other predatory designs, more daring, less distant, were envisaged. What could be done with impunity in the Far East, might likewise be done in Africa, in Europe even. A frontier incident at Wai Wai provided the occasion for the Italian Government to demand territofial and other concessions from Abyssinia. Before the League's attempts to deal with one recalcitrant member had quite expired, another potential conflict required attention.

The same procedure as in the previous case was followed. There were Committees of Seven, Five and

Thirteen, and a Conciliation Commission, appointed to investigate the circumstances of the Wai Wai incident, which cautiously but unhelpfully reported that 'neither the Ethiopians, acting from a national standpoint, nor the Italians, acting from a colonial standpoint* could be held responsible for it. Who, if anyone, was responsible, was not stated. If the various meetings of the League Assembly and Council called to discuss the Italo-Abyssinian conflict were